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Bass Time in Virginia, pages 14-15

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Number 7

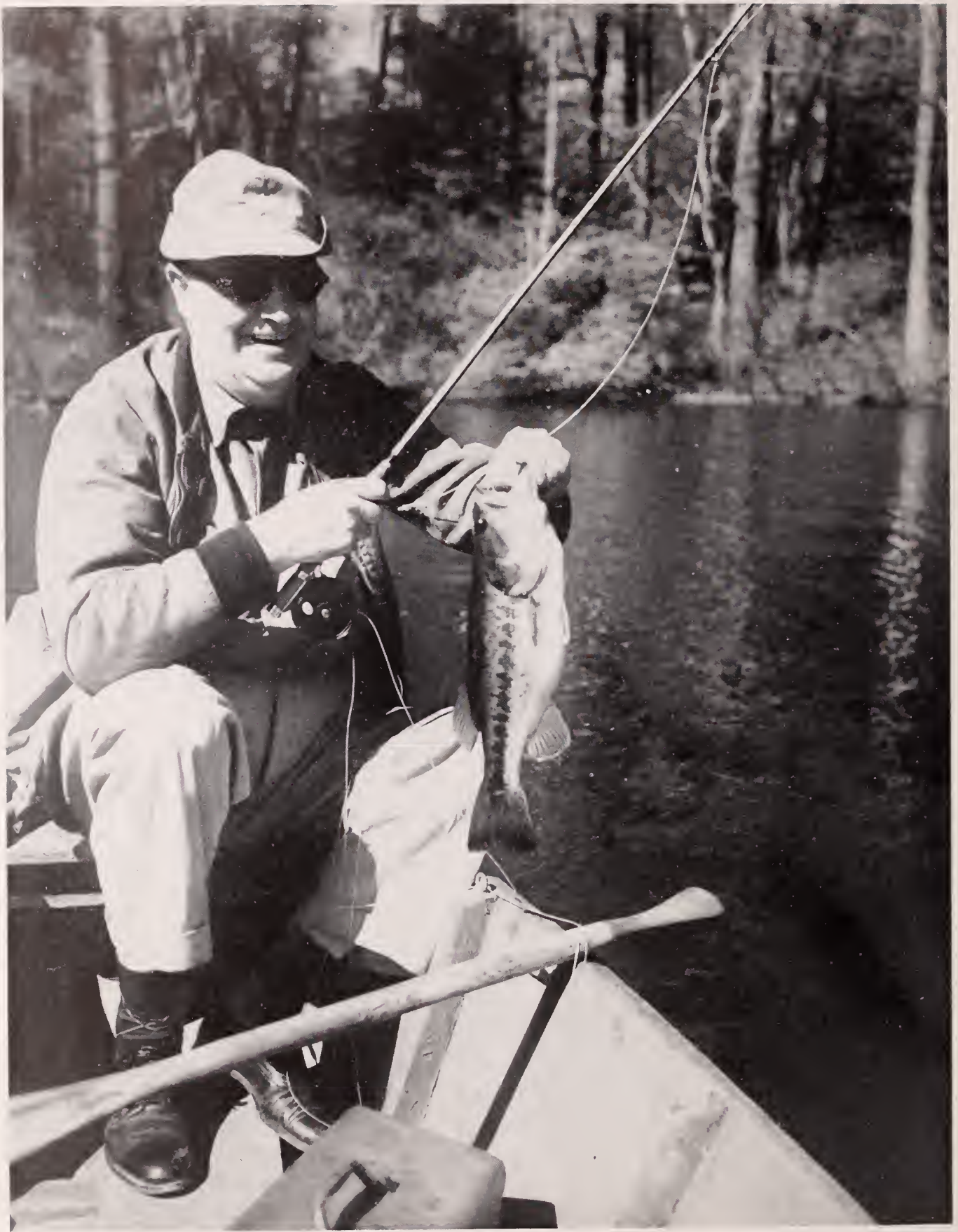


Photo by J. J. Shomon

Executive Director I. T. Quinn demonstrates his fishing skill at Custiss pond, New Kent County.

VIRGINIA WILDLIFE

Published by VIRGINIA COMMISSION OF GAME AND INLAND FISHERIES, Richmond 13, Virginia
A Monthly Magazine for Higher Standards of Outdoor Recreation Through Wildlife Conservation

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA



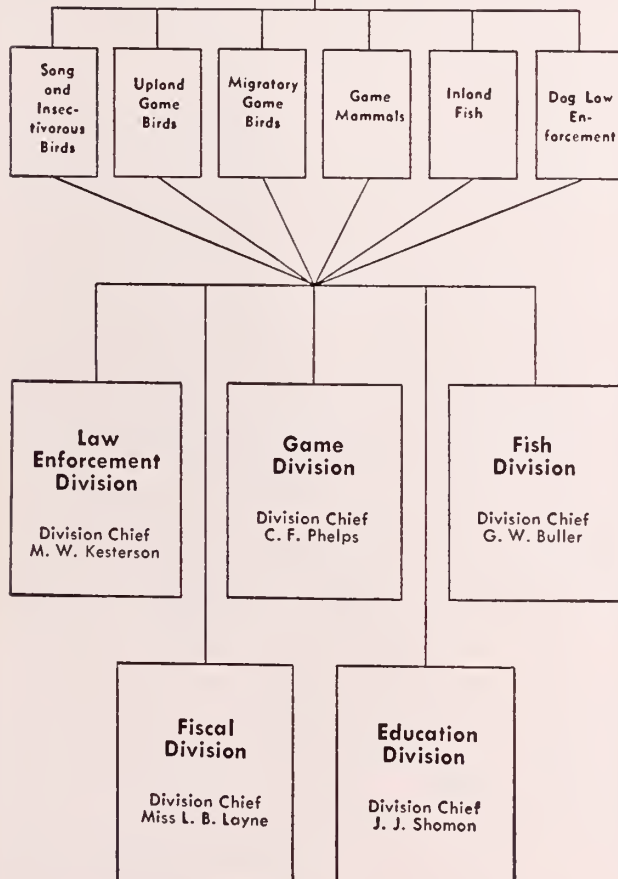
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I. T. QUINN, Executive Director
 P. O. Box 1642, Richmond, Va.



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Cover Photo

From Canada to Mexico the Mourning Dove is a common bird.
 Here a Virginia member of the clan poses for the camera.

*Photo by Cruickshank
 from National Audubon Society*

VIRGINIA WILDLIFE gratefully receives for consideration all news items, articles, photographs, sketches and other materials which deal with the use, management and study of Virginia's interrelated, renewable natural resources:

WILDLIFE

SOILS — CONSERVE — WATER

FORESTS

Since wildlife is a beneficiary of the work done by State and Federal land-use agencies in Virginia, editorial policy provides for recognition of their accomplishments and solicitation of their contributions. Credit is given on material published. Permission to reprint is granted provided proper credit is given.

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J. J. SHOMON—Editor

R. T. SPEERS—Associate Editor

We Begin Our Fifth Year

WITH THIS JULY issue of *Virginia Wildlife* we begin our fifth year as a post-war publication. Actually we are now in our eleventh volume and this may be a bit confusing to our readers.

To clarify the picture, it was back in 1937, September to be exact, that the first issue of *Virginia Wildlife* appeared—a modest little monthly bulletin concerning wildlife conservation. For the three years that followed, *Virginia Wildlife* was published as a cooperative undertaking of the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries and the Virginia Wildlife Federation. This cooperative arrangement was terminated by mutual consent in July, 1940. Beginning with the autumn number, 1940, the magazine became a quarterly publication and was completely taken over by the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries. Cecil F. DelaBarre continued as editor and James F. McInteer as associate editor. The policies of the new quarterly remained unchanged, an effort being made to bring to interested Virginia factual information concerning wildlife resources and management.

With the Fall-Winter issue of 1942, *Virginia Wildlife* again ceased publication. The war had called many of the Commission personnel into the armed services, and all operations of the Commission had to be drastically curtailed. Henry S. Mosby was the last editor of the quarterly, with Mr. DelaBarre as Director of Education.

Following World War II *Virginia Wildlife* again made its appearance as a Commission publication. Clyde P. Patton, biologist for the Commission, was brought in as editor and the new magazine, with different format, size, and broad objectives and a paid circulation, made its appearance in July, 1946. To Mr. Patton, much credit must be given for his fight to put out a first-rate magazine. It was he who laid out the style and editorial policy of the new *Virginia Wildlife*, a policy which has continued down to the present day. Mr. Patton, readers will recall, left Virginia in February, 1948 to take over as executive director of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission.

Our readers may wish to know just what our

editorial policy is, what we stand for, and what we are attempting to accomplish. This is not only a good question, but one that every reader of *Virginia Wildlife* should have an answer to. We can best sum it up in the following three short paragraphs:

1. *Virginia Wildlife's* editorial policy is pointed toward sound conservation of the Commonwealth's wildlife and other life-sustaining natural resources.
2. We stand for good principles of wildlife management and good land use.
3. Our basic objective is to help raise higher standards of outdoor recreation through a better appreciation of all forms of wildlife and related resources and how these vital resources directly affect man's welfare.

Those of us who work on *Virginia Wildlife* realize full well the difficult job that awaits us in the years that lie ahead. Acceptance of the conservation doctrine will not come easily. We realize, too, that the task of conservation education is the responsibility of every citizen. It is especially the responsibility of those in positions of leadership and existing conservation agencies: Civic and recreational organizations and churches; press, radio and film industries; the legislature; banks and trust companies; industrial corporations and their trade associations. It is really a job for everyone.

The profligate waste of our natural wealth can easily be expected of a young republic, especially in a country of almost unlimited wealth, yet after three centuries of devastation, it should be unthinkable. We now are equipped with the know-how to save our remaining natural resources, to halt erosion of our precious topsoil, to restore what is left of our proud forests, and to return the wildlife to its once over-flowing coverts. But before we can do this we must create in our Commonwealth a conservation atmosphere that will make every form of waste and misuse of land a glaring symbol of mismanagement. We are faced with the stark reality of using wisely what we have for the present generation and those yet unborn, or face the future with grim and foreboding expectancy.—J. J. S.



Photo by Kesteloo

YOUR COMMISSION CARRIES ON

A PERSONAL REPORT ON COMMISSION ACTIVITIES AS IT BEGINS ITS THIRD-YEAR PHASE OF THE LONG RANGE WILDLIFE RESTORATION PROGRAM

By I. T. QUINN
Executive Director

BEGINNING JULY 1, 1950, the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries will commence the third-year phase of its long range wildlife restoration program. This program was first adopted by the Commission back in June, 1948, and began with the fiscal year of that year. The adoption of this broad scale development program came as a result of numerous surveys and research in the game and fish management fields. It was felt that only by superhuman effort and a basically sound long range wildlife program in which all existing land-use agencies and the land-owners and sportsmen of the state would wholeheartedly cooperate, could progress be expected in the very pressing field of hunting and fishing.

By virtue of this need the Commission adopted the so-called long range wildlife restoration program and set about busily putting the program into effect. This, then is a report to the sportsmen of Virginia and to the public in general as to how

successful this program has been during recent years and what is contemplated during the ensuing year.

Before I go into the past accomplishments of the Commission I should like to briefly reiterate the purpose for, and some of the policies and objectives of, the Commission. The Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries is charged by law with the protection of the fish and wildlife resources of the Commonwealth and it is expected to so manage these vital resources that they will benefit the widest number of people for the longest time, without danger to the existing supply. Basically, the policies and objectives of the Commission are to maintain the existing supplies of fish and wildlife and to strive for better hunting and fishing in the future. To do this the Commission believes that it must:

1. Protect our existing game and inland fish by adequate law enforcement.

2. Increase all forms of wildlife which yield to the tools of wildlife management.
3. Maintain and wherever possible improve existing habitat for wildlife.
4. Restock by transfer from one area to another or by artificial propagation only such numbers of wildlife as may be needed for reproductive brood stock.
5. Favor restrictions on take of wildlife consistent with good management.
6. Secure the most reliable information on game and fish management based upon research and put into practice only that which is sound, practical, and economical.
7. Help in every way to curb existing pollution of our State's inland waters.
8. Insist on wise and efficient wildlife administration and careful spending of monies from the "game protection fund."
9. Obtain wiser acceptance of conservation practices and aid in spreading more resource-use education among our people, especially the youth of the State.
10. Cooperate with individuals, clubs, and state and federal land-use agencies to attain these objectives.

Game Program

Generally speaking, the Game Division's program and policy is based upon the sound principle of habitat maintenance and restoration. The Com-

The Game Division's program is largely based on habitat improvement for wildlife. Field border plantings are a major activity.



Photo by Mullins

mission feels that game species can exist or increase only to the limits of suitable habitat or favorable environment. Some of our recent accomplishments in the Game Division field are:

1. There has been a steady increase in the state's deer herd. Due to careful deer management the 1949-1950 kill showed a substantial increase over the kill the previous year.
2. Virginia's wild turkey restoration program has been accelerated immensely during the past two years. More high quality turkeys were released during the 1949-50 year than any before.
3. Beaver, extinct in the state up to 1932, were restored to 31 counties.
4. There was a substantial restocking of raccoons and rabbits in all areas needing brood stock. Last year 10,000 wild rabbits were released in areas deficient in breeding stock.
5. Our bicolor lespedeza nursery which was established in 1947 has steadily increased production until nearly 10,000 food and cover plantings have been made for quail and rabbits on privately owned lands.
6. Progress is being made in the completion of three waterfowl breeding and resting areas in Tidewater, Virginia.
7. The Commission has employed additional trained wildlife biologists for game management work and these men are currently in the process of putting the game management

The Fish Division is engaged in active restocking of Virginia's waters in order to provide more and better fishing.



Photo by J. J. Shomon

phases of the long range wildlife restoration program into operation. The Game Division now has ten trained biologists in its employ.

8. The acquisition of a 2,800-acre farm in Orange County which is now being developed as a demonstration area for the production of farm game, and as a place where field trials may be held.

It is expected that the future game program will largely continue the present operations which have been set up and of course wherever possible these operations expanded. These include:

1. Continuation of habitat improvement efforts to produce more farm game.
2. Intensify further our cooperation with farmers and the Soil Conservation Districts for the establishment of more permanent food and cover patches.
3. Continue expansion of present bicolor nursery operations to produce all future seed and plants.
4. Speed up present game management program on ruffed grouse, turkeys and deer on the two national forests of Virginia (this area provides 1,500,000 acres of public shooting ground, the largest area of its kind for public hunting east of the Mississippi River).
5. Restock the few remaining counties needing deer and try to steadily increase the yearly deer kill every year.
6. Continue present program and increase pro-

duction of wild turkeys so that suitable habitat in presently closed counties can be restocked and opened to shooting; this may take a number of years, but it is toward this end that the Commission is working.

7. Continue present restocking program of beaver, raccoon and rabbits in such areas where brood stock is deficient.
8. Acquire wherever practical marsh land for public waterfowl shooting, and develop such land for maximum waterfowl production; and
9. Lastly, round out a staff of trained men to supervise development of the present game management program.

Fish Program

The Commission's fish program is largely based on the premise that restocking of game fish provides more and better fishing, and that it is a means of improving the native brood stocks in our public waters. In the case of trout, the Commission feels that it provides a special type of sport fishing, where in the past almost none existed. Three large fish hatcheries and one rearing station are turning out hundreds of thousands of large size game fish which are not only adding to the number of fish caught, but are also improving the strains of fish. Briefly, Virginia's fish program can be summarized into recent activities, and the future program. Its

(Continued on page 21)

Law enforcement work calls for increasing vigilance on the part of wardens and other field personnel of the Commission.



Photo by Mullins

The Commission has an extensive conservation education program under way. Audio-visual education is stressed.



Photo by Kesteloo



Photo by Chas. C. Ebbets

Flyrod giants! Few fresh water fish can compete in size or gameness with these ocean beauties!

THE FLY ROD GOES TO SEA

By WINSTON MONTAGUE

PERHAPS YOU WILL be surprised this summer if you hear one of your friends tell about catching a 20 pound rockfish on a fly rod. Do not be too surprised for fly rod fishing in salt water is the up and coming sport in Virginia and more men will take it up as soon as they find out what fun it can be.

When you take your fly rod and streamer flies or popping bugs and go down to the Bay, to one of our great tidal rivers, or even out in the ocean a whole new world of fishing thrills will open to you. You may think it cannot be done but it not only can be but it has been done in many other places. Last summer some few sportsmen in Virginia took up this fascinating form of fishing for the first time. It will be more popular this summer as the word gets around. I venture to say that before many summers have passed thousands of Virginia sportsmen will be finding new thrills in salt water with their fly rods.

I have done quite a little of this fishing elsewhere and some little in Virginia and I know from experience what thrills you can get from salt water fly fishing. Taking my word for it, once you have tied into one of these salt water game fish on a fly you are going to lose a whole lot of interest in fishing for bass, pike, trout and other fresh water species.

On my fly rod, and using conventional fly fishing methods I have at one time and another caught about 20 different species of salt water fish, including rockfish, trout, channel bass and bluefish, all of which are popular Virginia sport fish. I cannot think of a game fish in Virginia which inhabits salt water which will not take a fly. While I have not caught a cobia, which we in Virginia commonly call a bonita, on my fly rod I have caught enough of them on feathers while trolling to know that they will take a fly. Dolphin will take flies quite readily and that covers most of the popular



The author prepares to fish in a quiet inlet of the sea. Now . . . which fly to use?

salt water game fish in Virginia except white marlin. I would not doubt but what you could get one of them on a very large white streamer for I have had them strike at a trolled feather, and a rather small one at that.

To date my largest rock on a fly rod was a 12 pounder, which was caught on a Joe Brooks popping bug. I happened to be fishing with Joe Brooks at the time and that same day he landed a 12 pound striper on a streamer fly. Incidentally, Joe holds the world's record for rock on a fly rod with a 29 pound, 10 ounce fish which he caught on a popping bug. Joe has also taken a 23 pound channel bass on a streamer fly and if one that size will take a fly so will a forty pounder.

Flies not only get salt water fish but they get a lot of them. One afternoon last fall Joe Brooks and I fished a tidal river with Walt Weber, famous wildlife artist, and Joe's wife, Mary. Between the four of us we landed 56 stripers, or rockfish as they are known locally. Joe and Walt did most of the fishing and they caught about fifty of the fish. Walt caught a few on a casting rod but most of the fish were taken on streamer flies. Shortly after that Charley Willis and his brother, Navy Captain John Willis, using flies, landed 53 rock in a single afternoon. I remember another occasion several years ago when Jack Gwathmey, Bob Parrish and I caught more than 70 rockfish fly fishing in the Little Wicomico.



Striped bass or rockfish on a flyrod provide sport fishing that can't be equaled.

Some men like to use a number two spinner when fly fishing in salt water. Perhaps the spinner attracts fish but it is not necessary and it is much easier to cast without it. Most of the good fly rod men I know use flies without spinners.

If you are interested in trying this fascinating sport you will be interested in knowing what equipment you will need. The essentials are a good heavy fly rod, a line with plenty of backing on the reel; a reel big enough to hold the line and necessary backing and preferably a reel with some kind of brake or drag; some nylon or gut leader; and some streamer flies and popping bugs. The popping bugs are not essential but rock and trout will take them and it is lots of fun to get these fish by this method.

To get a little more specific, I would suggest the following: A fly rod weighing not less than six or six and a half ounces and being at least nine feet in length; a minimum of 100 yards of backing and preferably 150 yards; and plenty of white and yellow streamer salt water flies. For backing you may use silk casting line similar to that used for fresh water casting but 14 pound test nylon squidder line is better as it will stand up better in salt water.

I have an Orvis impregnated fly rod designed for salt water fishing and it has proven thoroughly satisfactory. It is a two piece rod, nine and a half feet long and weighs about six and three quarter

(Continued on page 22)



Photo by H. S. Mosby

This may seem humane, but it's poor game management!

CAPTIVE GAME

By CHESTER F. PHELPS

Chief, Game Division

What are the rules and regulations governing the keeping of live game, birds and animals? Here the Game Division Chief provides the official answer.

THE COMMISSION'S GAME DIVISION is almost daily pressed with inquiries concerning the keeping of live game animals and birds. Letters such as, "My neighbor found a bear cub in the mountains some days ago, and gave it to me for a pet. He is such a cute little fellow that I would like to keep him. Please advise if I must have a permit to do this?" Or to put it differently, "I have two squirrels which I got from a tree when it was felled for timber. I understand I must have permission to keep them. Please send the permit at once."

Letters of this type are sent in by well meaning individuals, and since they are so frequent it is believed that an explanation of Commission policy is in order.

The Commission's policy regarding captive game has evolved through many years of study and experience. The policies, regulations and laws that have been adopted are too numerous to explain in detail here; however, the basic regulations and

reasons for them are quite simple.

To begin with, no person may legally hold any game bird or game animal in captivity without proper authorization from the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries. Generally speaking, a permit of a specific type is needed if this is to be done. Game animals, including the fur bearers, are defined by regulation as the bear, deer, elk, fox, rabbit, squirrel, beaver, mink, muskrat, opossum, otter and raccoon. Game birds include the Clapper rail, English ring-necked and other introduced species of pheasants, grouse, quail, turkey, and all migratory game birds such as doves, ducks, geese, plovers, rails, swan, woodcock, yellowlegs, brant, coot, gallinules, sora, and snipe. While a permit is needed to hold any of the above, none is needed to hold species *not* classed as game, such as the crow, English sparrow, hawk, buzzard, owl, skunk, wildcat, etc. It should be remembered, however, that the bald eagle, while not classed as a game bird by the Commonwealth, is protected by federal law, as are

most songbirds, and therefore may not be held in captivity without the proper federal permit. In addition to a federal permit, a state permit for the holding of any *migratory* game bird is also needed.

Returning to the lady who wanted the bear cub for a pet, we find that there are several exceptions to the general rule for permits. It is the policy of the Commission not to grant permits for the holding of bear and deer at any time, and for good reasons. While a bear cub is undoubtedly an appealing creature it is unfortunate that its development does not stop when it reaches 50 pounds in weight. A mature bear of 200 to 300 pounds is hardly cute and certainly not a fit playmate for children. In past years before a halt was called to the practice, the issuance of permits to hold bear cubs invariably, in a year or two, brought an urgent request to the Commission to reclaim the animal, as the combination of an expensive feed bill, and a pet that could no longer be petted, was just too much. Actually such captive animals are doomed to almost certain death, as they lose their natural fear of humans, frequently making their way after release to mountain homesteads where the frightened owners promptly shoot them down—in some instances on a porch. Those that escape this unhappy end usually become easy prey for the first lucky hunter who comes along. We have cases on record where bears, reared in captivity by a kindly hand, suddenly turned on their benefactors with serious results. One such incident occurred a few years ago at a Richmond park where a child's foot was nearly torn off by a supposedly tame bear. The

policy against holding deer in captivity is likewise based on years of experience. True, fawn deer are unusually nice pets as game animals go, and often become as tame and engaging as a dog. What is generally not appreciated, however, is that they too become dangerous and after being raised in captivity are not suitable for release in the wild.

There are numerous cases on record where deer, raised in captivity, have attacked humans even after being released in the wild. While buck deer seem to be the worst offenders, does, too, become belligerent. One such instance is a current problem in a western county. Undoubtedly, the offender will have to be shot. And, like bear, these hand-reared animals generally have a short life span when released. Therefore no good purpose is to be served by allowing persons to hold bear and deer and the Commission has wisely prohibited it. In practically all cases, fawns and bear cubs are captured by persons who think they have been lost or left to starve by the natural parents. Such an occurrence is actually very rare, for in most instances the mother doe has been frightened away or the parent bear has left her cub temporarily while she attended to other affairs. Had these youngsters been left unmolested they would have been reclaimed in due time and everyone concerned would have been much better off.

In speaking of game birds and animals as pets, a few general observations may be of interest. There is no provision by which any game species may be held as a pet. The Commission's primary responsibility is to protect, conserve and increase the supply of game birds and animals and the holding of such

Bears and raccoons are among the most common of the woods babies taken for pets. When they reach this size they pose a serious problem to their captors.



as pets does not fit into this pattern. It is difficult for a professional game manager, intimately familiar with all species, to understand why anyone should ever want a game animal as a pet. Outside of the humanitarian aspects of denying the unfortunates a natural life in the wild there are other practical considerations, mostly unfavorable. The raccoon, for example, prized by many as a household companion, is well known as an undependable and often a treacherous pet. While many 'coons in captivity may become, at least to outward appearances as domesticated as the family cat, there are numerous instances of sudden, painful attacks on their fond captors. In at least a few instances pet 'coons have been responsible for serious, almost fatal injury to children. The same can be said of most of our native game animals. Game animals held as pets only bring complications regarding feeding, holding facilities, training, the possibility of physical injury, and leave nothing to benefit either the animal or person involved.

Ample provision is made for the persons wanting to engage in commercial game farm operations. These, however, must be bona fide operations, as there is a specific regulation prohibiting any game species being held for advertising or exhibition purposes such as in connection with filling stations or carnivals. Also, at least one pair of the species must be held. Permits are not issued covering single individuals except under temporary conditions as explained elsewhere. All permits involving a fee are issued for the fiscal year, July 1 to June 30, which means that a permit issued in May will have to be renewed at additional cost before July 1.

The most common permit is the game breeder type, issued at a cost of five dollars per fiscal year. This is used to sanction federal permits covering migratory game birds and also authorizes the breeding of the non-migratory grouse, pheasant, quail and turkey, in addition to the fox and rabbit. While the squirrel is classed as a game animal it seldom breeds in captivity. Therefore, since no useful purpose can be served by confining these animals, indefinite holding permits are not issued. Under this permit, the many varieties of pheasants may be held, but only for the purpose of propagation or restocking.

The pheasant occupies a unique status among Virginia's game as it is the only species which can legally be raised as food. If more than 50 birds are raised, a special pheasant breeder's permit is available for this purpose at a cost of five dollars per fiscal year. If fewer than 50 birds are raised, there is no charge for the permit. The distinction between this permit and the game breeder's permit,

as concerns pheasants, is that the latter, while authorizing the breeding and sale of pheasants for propagation or stocking, does *not* permit their sale for food.

For the fur animals—beaver, mink, muskrat, opossum and raccoon—a fur farmer's permit is provided at a cost of five dollars per fiscal year.

A quail breeder's permit, issued free, is designed especially to cover 4-H club projects where members raise and release quail as an educational activity. With this permit all birds raised must be released under the supervision of the county game warden and none may be sold or transferred to another party. It is not intended for this permit to cover the activities of those who may raise quail on a continuing basis, or as a hobby, even though all birds are released and not sold. All such persons should have a game breeder's permit.

There are instances where it is desirable to allow individuals to hold almost any game species for a limited time. Quite frequently persons will rescue very young game animals under circumstances where it is obvious that the parents are dead or cannot possibly care for their offspring. Young squirrels and raccoons may be recovered from trees felled for timber, or a den of foxes may be discovered while clearing land, or a quail wounded by a hunter may appeal to human sympathy. Under such circumstances, a temporary holding permit may be issued with the understanding that the Commission has no responsibility for any costs or damages involved. Permits of this type are issued free and are valid only for a period long enough for the bird or animal to reach an age or a stage of recovery sufficient for it to fend for itself in the wild. Game so held remains the property of the Commonwealth and must be released, at the expiration of the permit, under the supervision of the county game warden.

One other permit covering game birds and animals is issued by the Commission. This authorizes taxidermists to mount or stuff birds and animals and parts thereof for sale or other compensation. The cost is five dollars per fiscal year. Like all other permits, a report on the year's operations must be rendered to the Commission as of June 30 of each year.

In the somewhat complex matter of permits, however, there is one bright light. Those persons who wish to raise chinchillas, the small native South American animal, that is currently selling for \$1,250 to \$1,500 a pair, need not worry about the diligent game warden. The chinchilla is not considered a game animal and can be held by anyone without concern to the Game Commission!

CONSERVATIONGRAM

Late Wildlife News . . . At A Glance

A NEW 64 PAGE bird booklet describing the common songbirds of Virginia is contemplated for publication early this fall, according to J. J. Shomon, Chief of the Education Division. The new booklet is being prepared by the Education Division in collaboration with J. J. Murray of the Virginia Society of Ornithology. It is expected to be profusely illustrated and will include 10 full page four color plates.

Planned to be written in simple, non-technical language, the booklet will have chapters on bird identification, bird classification, value of birds, songbird conservation, recommended bird conservation projects, and will also include a check list of the common Virginia birds.

For many years the Game Commission has been flooded with requests for a booklet of this type and it is hoped that the projected new booklet will answer this demand.

Approximately 5,000 copies of the booklet are expected to be distributed to the Virginia public schools in the interest of wildlife conservation education.

VIRGINIA'S BASS SEASON opened once again on June 20, and Old Dominion fishermen took full advantage of the Commission's fish stocking program. Over 137,000 bass were placed in suitable waters throughout the state during the past year.

Lake Gordon, the new Mecklenburg County pond constructed by the Commission was the scene of some nice catches.

V.P.I. WILL ONCE again play host to the game warden school from August 21 to 26. The success of last year's school in helping wardens to cope with the complex problems of law enforcement work was a source of great satisfaction to the Commission. Expert instruction in methods of law enforcement, first aid, public relations and in other related fields will be presented again this year.

TWO NEW WILDLIFE movies will soon be available to Virginia sportsmen when feature releases now under production by the Education Division of the Game Commission are completed. Now scheduled to be finished sometime in August and to be ready for release for public showing in the fall, the new films are tentatively entitled "Covies and Singles," a quail movie describing the life history of the Bob-White Quail, and "Brooks and Rainbows," a film describing the complete story of the trout program in Virginia. Both films are to be of twenty minutes duration upon completion and will be in sound and color.

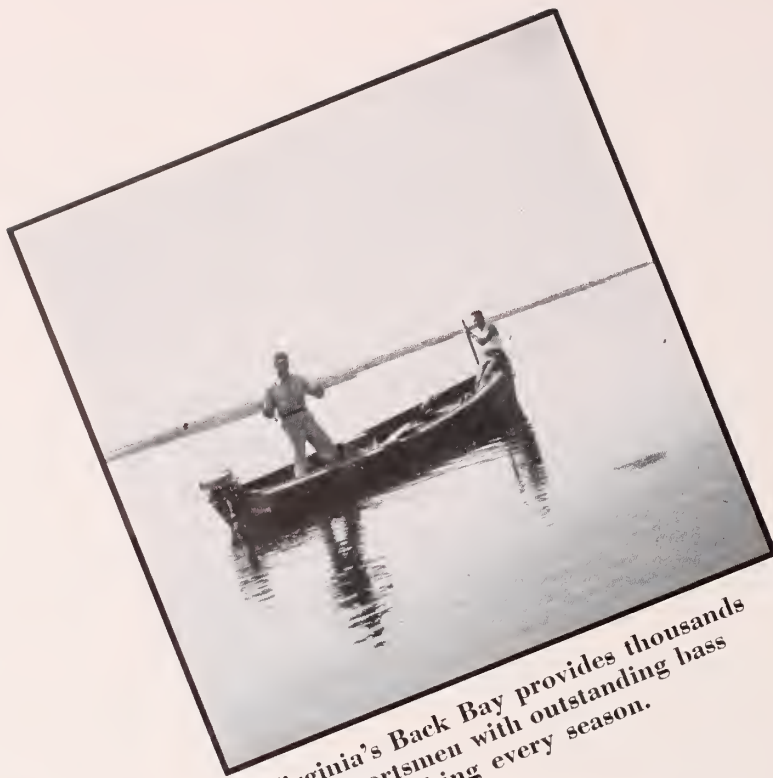
INCREASED INTEREST is being shown by conservation groups throughout the country at the apparently favorable Congressional reaction to the idea of reviving the Civilian Conservation Corps. Bills have been introduced in both the House and Senate for this purpose and proponents of the measure have high hopes for passage.

In addition to increased conservation work, such as reforestrations of burnt over and submarginal lands, habitat improvement work for wildlife, blister rust control, fire protection work, road building, etc., the Corps would serve to absorb some of the surplus labor crop and turn it to a useful purpose.

THE LIBERALIZED MIGRATORY waterfowl hunting regulations in effect during the 1949-50 shooting season raised the legal kill of wild ducks by 1.5 million, according to Albert M. Day, Director of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Based on an analysis of data gathered from 87,127 bag checks and 25,600 post-season hunter contacts, the wild duck kill index figure for the United States during the past hunting season was 18.5 million birds. The index for the 1948-49 season was 17 million.

Although the number of hunters declined about 10 per cent to 1,676,400 in 1949, Mr. Day declared that in addition to the increase of 10 days in the length of the shooting season, hunters had greater hunting opportunity because large flocks were concentrated in the steadily diminishing areas still suitable for migratory waterfowl. Also, millions of ducks and geese remained in the United States during the mild fall instead of wintering in Mexico or other southern points, which is their normal procedure.

The Atlantic flyway States had 12 per cent of the hunters and 12 per cent of the kill. In 1948 they had 13 per cent of the hunters and 10 per cent of the kill.



Virginia's Back Bay provides thousands of sportsmen with outstanding bass fishing every season.



Among Virginia's many famous bass streams, the James is noted for its excellent smallmouth fishing.



The arch in the rod tells of a hard fighting fish that still needs "convincing."

Bass Time in Virginia



Right out of water! The camera caught the moment of a jump. The fighting qualities of the bass are evident.

Photos by Shorrock & East

Whether it's the quiet waters of the Back Bay, or the deep floodwaters of the James River, the Old Dominion is a bass and bronze warrior hits the lure you're in for a fight.

July brings the bass season in to a close. The program of the Commission begins to pay off. 150 a season is the limit this year! Season ends September 31 west of the Blue Ridge, June 30 to the east.



End of the line! A largemouth is finally brought to hand after a stiff battle.

VIRGINIA WILDLIFE



Get this largemouth bass at the top of the list. The bass endear him to all fishermen.

and Kesteloo

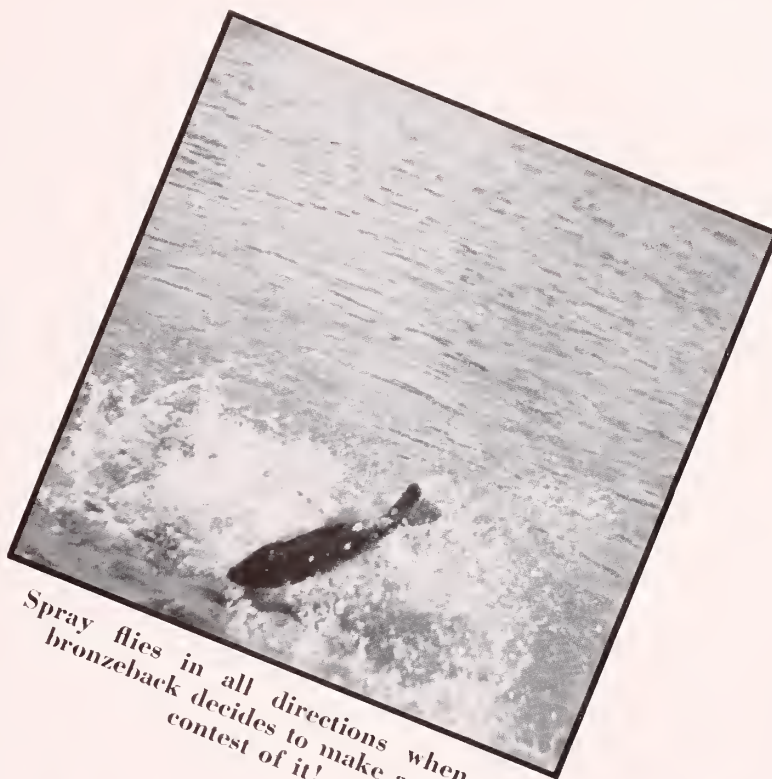
In a hidden mill pond, the wide open waters of Virginia's famous Shenandoah River is exciting sport. When a green bass is in for a battle!

Following and the heavy stocking program. Remember though, 8 a day, season runs from June 20 to December 15 east of the Blue Ridge.

Fit to be tied! This whopper from the Chickahominy would make any fisherman proud!



JULY, 1950



Spray flies in all directions when a bronzeback decides to make a real contest of it!



Quiet mill ponds offer some outstanding bass fishing to sportsmen in the Old Dominion.



Results! Not the limit, but a nice catch for any fisherman.





WINGED FISHERMAN

By RONALD T. SPEERS
Associate Editor, Virginia Wildlife

*Photos by Cruickshank
from National Audubon Society*

WHEELING AND TURNING above the marshland, the big osprey swung in ever-widening circles. The sluggish stream below flowed through the heart of a lost world of cattails and rushes and provided good hunting. The warm summer sun touched and held the whiteness of the osprey's breast and head as he soared and swept in the light breeze. Every breath of wind fanned through the inverted dyhedral of his wings as he turned first this way and then that way, gaining momentum with every turn.

The big bird sailed slowly downward. Closer and closer to the stream's surface each great circle carried him, until suddenly he seemed to stop in mid air, hang floating for a moment, and then plunge downward to disappear feet foremost in a cloud of flying spray. Almost before the splash of his dive had settled in the stillness of the marsh, he was out of the water and into the air again, but this time he was heavily laden and flight was a matter of slow and laborious wing beats. Clutched head foremost in his talons was a flapping and struggling carp, snatched from the seeming security of the stream and borne aloft to make a meal for the three downy young ospreys not yet large enough to leave the nest.

The nest itself was a mass of sticks and twigs located near the top of a huge dead pine on the far side of the marsh. For years it had served as a landmark to all who used the swampland. Toward this spot the osprey labored, intent on bringing the meal to its young.

But other eyes had seen the dive and the capture. High in the blue sky, soaring on great pinions in

the brilliant sunlight, a magnificent bald eagle had watched the performance. His fierce eyes had seen the osprey struggle from the surface of the water and start toward the nest, had seen the flapping gasping fish clutched in the osprey's grip. Swiftly now, he closed his widespread wings, and pitched downward in a screaming dive toward the unsuspecting fish hawk far below. Down, down he dropped like a shot, white head and neck outstretched, white tail feathers spread and wings cocked out for balance, down through space like an unleashed comet.

The osprey had no warning of his approach. Paramount in his thoughts was the idea of feeding the young in the big nest on the other side of the marsh. The first indication of danger he had was when a flashing rushing mass of brown and white hurtled past on his left side. A striking talon caught and raked his wing in passing and two of his long primary feathers floated and spun away on the breeze.

The startled osprey instinctively turned and shot upward, frantically beating the air to get away from his unexpected attacker, but the weight of the fish slowed him down tremendously. He knew now that this was his old arch-enemy the great bald eagle and only the quickest kind of maneuvering would save him.

The impetus of the great eagle's dive had carried him far below his victim but now he swung back, and climbing with the speed of a rocket, he came in on the osprey from below, screaming hideously and with talons extended. The osprey shrieked back at his attacker with a mixture of rage, defiance,



The osprey's nest is constructed of sticks and twigs and any vegetation that is handy.

and fear, then instinctively slid sideways in an attempt to avoid the raking claws of the mighty eagle, but again he was just a second too slow and more feathers were torn loose to drift in the wind.

Once more the eagle rolled and came shrieking down to the attack, but it was too much for the winged fisherman. Dropping the fish he dove out to one side to avoid the blow, but this time the eagle made no attempt to strike. Instead he continued on past the frightened fish hawk and with a quick motion of his extended talons, caught the dropping fish in a vise-like grip. Having neatly completed his bit of skyway robbery, he paid no more attention to the shrieking frustrated hawk, but leisurely flapped away with his prize.

The osprey, too upset to continue his fishing in the marsh, soared up and up, far over the treetops, and made away for another marsh several miles beyond. Perhaps here he could fish in peace and still provide his young with a noontime meal. Having been robbed once, he knew there was no use in staying in the first marsh to fish. The eagle would probably be back after he finished the fish in hopes of repeating the performance. The osprey intended to give him no such opportunity. The young birds in the big nest would just have to wait a little longer for a meal, that was all there was for it.

The above may sound like a bit of romanticized folk lore, but it is a common occurrence. Eagles

are just one of the many troubles that make life hard for America's largest hawk. The situation recounted above happens many times in our Virginia marshes; I have personally seen it occur twice in widely separate locations in the U. S. and Canada and have been told of many other similar incidents elsewhere in the country.

However, as with so many other forms of wildlife, man is probably the greatest problem that the osprey must face. Because it is a hawk, it shares in the persecution that comes from the widespread and fallacious theory that all hawks are predators and should be destroyed. In reality, only the Coopers hawk, Sharp-shinned hawk and the Goshawk are truly predatory species on game and song birds and even then their status in nature's balance is in doubt.

The osprey is strictly a fish eater, although an occasional frog or water snake may be taken, but no authenticated records can be found to back any claim to predation by the osprey on game birds or animals.

Much has been made, by the trout and bass fishermen, of the osprey's fishing habits, but actually the major portion, in fact almost all, of the fish hawk's prey is made up of species that are of little economic importance, such as carp, suckers, alewives, menhaden, etc., fish that swim near the surface and are easily taken.

Of course, ospreys are like any other form of life.

(Continued on page 20)

Arthropods Parasitic on Birds

By **BRUCE D. REYNOLDS**
Professor of Biology, University of Virginia

THE MAJORITY OF PEOPLE pay little attention to birds. Some are interested in them as game, as pests, or because of their beautiful plumage or songs. A few ornithologists study them to learn of their habits and behavior. Rarely does one show interest in, or knowledge of, the parasites living on their surface.

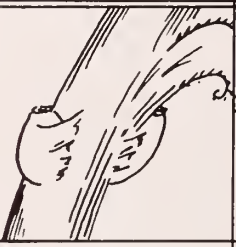
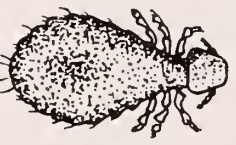
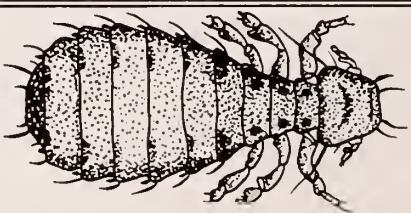


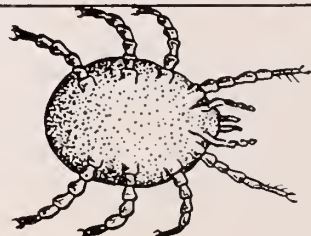

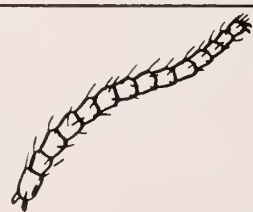
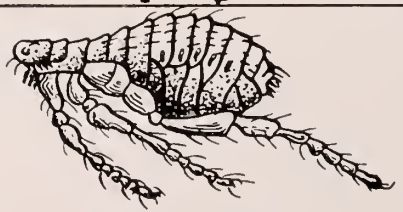
Several years ago one of my graduate students made a study of the arthropods found on certain birds and in their nests. From collections made in Albemarle and Giles Counties, Virginia, and in Cameron and Elk Counties, Pennsylvania, the following birds were examined: chipping sparrow, house sparrow, Carolina junco, catbird, robin, pigeon, chicken, crow, and screech owl. Thus the findings should be representative of conditions found in the Piedmont and Mountain sections of the Middle and South Atlantic States, and suggestive of the conditions elsewhere.

The adult birds were caught in traps, examined for parasites, banded and released. Young birds

were examined about the time they were ready to leave their nests. After the nests had been vacated they were taken into the laboratory and placed on white paper, or in white pans. The vermin soon crawled off and could easily be seen and captured on the white surface. Finally the nest was taken apart and examined for forms reluctant to leave their place of hiding.

Biting lice (order Mallophaga) were found on the majority of adult birds. Lice are fairly restricted as to host species and nearly every species of bird has its own species of louse. Three species of lice occur on the common chicken, probably due to the fact that chickens have acquired other species from various domestic fowl with which they have long been associated in man's barn yard. Lice have claws specialized for clinging to feathers; also, they glue their eggs to their host's feathers. It is not surprising, therefore, that they are rarely found except on adult birds. They feed on the barbules of feathers and other dry organic matter. Hence,

Three life stages of the parasitic arthropods found on some of our common birds.

	EGG	LARVA	ADULT
BITING LICE order MALLOPHAGA			
MITES order ACARINA			
FLEAS order SIPHONAPTERA			



Game birds like the grouse are subject to arthropod parasites.

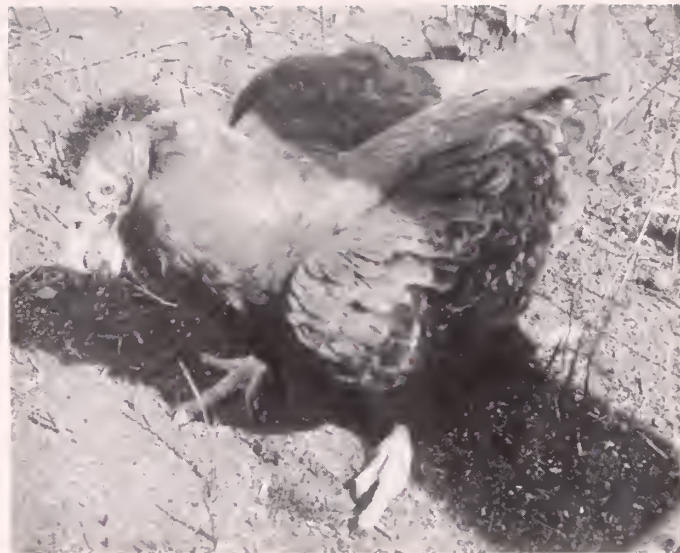


Photo by H. S. Mosby

The vulture's feeding habits render him open to infestation.

they do not irritate their hosts nearly as much as do most other ectoparasites.

Mites (order Acarina) were the most abundant arthropods encountered. They occurred on adults, nestlings, and in the recently abandoned nests. Sometimes they were present in countless numbers, especially on young birds and in nests. Three genera of mites were identified, some of which were found on several species of birds. Mites feed on blood and spend much of their time in the nests and on the roosts. Associated with this habit they have learned to feed on a wider range of hosts. Many birds are relatively free of mites except during their nesting season.

Fleas (order Siphonaptera) were very common in the nests of crows. These insects feed on the blood of both old and young birds. Like butterflies, they undergo complete metamorphosis; during the young, or larval, stage they feed on excrement and other organic matter found in the nest. Since the larval and pupal stages of fleas require several weeks to be completed, the young birds leave the nest before most of the fleas developed there reach the adult, or blood-sucking, stage. This accounts for the large numbers of fleas and flea larvae found commonly in old nests.

In 1938, Clay and Rothschild reported their results on examining captive birds that had died in the London Zoo. A total of 91 species of birds belonging to 34 families were included in this study. They found 48 species of Mallophaga distributed among 42 species of birds. Only about half of the birds examined were infested, and with exception of the jay, Stanley crane and buzzard, the infestations were relatively light. The percent-

age of infestation was high in the three species of cardinals examined.

Twelve species of mites were recorded from 11 species of birds. In general, the infestations were light except on the green magpie. The relatively small number of mites encountered probably was due to the fact that nestlings and nests were not examined.

Fleas were found on the Mandarin duck. They were the same species, *Ceratophyllus gallinae*, found on the crow by Miss Anderson in Pennsylvania.

In a subsequent paper Clay and Rothschild (1939) reported 28 species of biting lice and 7 species of mites from 62 species of birds taken from aviaries other than those at the London Zoo.

Although none of these investigators reported finding ticks on any of the birds examined, I have observed them on several occasions. For example, in March, 1936, a migrant robin was found in a comatose condition. Eleven partially engorged ticks were attached to its head and neck. No cause, other than the ticks, for the pathological condition was discovered, although examinations were made for blood and intestinal parasites. Unfortunately the ticks were not preserved nor identified other than as belonging to the family Ixodidae.

Ordinarily ticks show a fair degree of host specificity, but when pressed by hunger* they may cling, or even attach to an abnormal host. Thus migrating birds may play an important role in transporting ticks from one section of the country to another. As yet ticks have not been shown to be vectors of bird diseases comparable to spotted

*This word is used guardedly, for ticks may live for months or years without food.

fever in mammals, but a tick infected with the spotted fever germ could be transported to a distant locality by a bird.

Certain of the blowflies (order Diptera) deposit their eggs in the nests of birds and some maggots suck the blood of nestlings. Other maggots bore into the tissues of the young birds and may cause their death. Hippoboscids flies are fairly common on hawks, owls, and some other birds.

Attention has been called to the mites that normally parasitize birds. Sometimes poultry mites get on people and cause slight trouble. Phoebe and other birds that frequently build under porches may bring in so many mites that they become unwelcome guests. The feelings of discomfort that people experience from bird mites is due more to the tickling sensation of crawling than to the irritation of their bites. In addition to leaving their own mites where they may annoy man, birds play an important role in disseminating mites that may cause man real trouble.

In writing of mite vectors of scrub typhus, Williams (1944) states "Wild birds do at least serve as distributing agents of the mites." Mites that may transmit scrub typhus have been reported from migrating birds by Walsh, while Keukenschrijver found scrub typhus mites on most of the crow-pheasants he examined in Malaya.

The chigger (*Eutrombicula alfreddugesi*) may cause great annoyance to people in this section who go into the "brush" during July and August. They occur in greatest numbers under the near blackberry bushes. Ewing thinks that ground-frequenting birds are commonly attacked by these mites. Williams, who collected 10,000 chiggers under one group of blackberry bushes in 1945, thinks the reason for so many chiggers being in such a small area is because their forbears dropped off of birds visiting the bushes to feed the previous year.

Only the larval stage of chiggers attack vertebrates. The adults feed on plant juices. The young chigger will insert its mouth-parts into the epidermis which brings about the liquification of the tissues. This liquid (not blood as is generally believed) serves as the mite's food. If undisturbed, chiggers will drop off in three, four days and subsequently develop into adults. These produce eggs which usually hatch out the following summer and the young are ready to feed on bird, rodent, or man—whichever happens along.

In view of the fact that mites and fleas remain behind in the old nest, one can see the advantage of building a new nest for the second brood, as is done by many birds, rather than using the old one. In this era of incubators, many are unfamiliar with

the poor physical condition of a brooding hen after sitting on a clutch of eggs for three weeks, or more. Her "cross as a setting hen" attitude and extreme emaciation are due, at least in part, to the mites crawling over and feeding on her. Those who have bird houses would be doing their feathered friends a service if they would thoroughly fumigate them as soon as the first brood has vacated. Furthermore, do not have more than one apartment to a box, and boxes should be on separate foundations.

WINGED FISHERMAN

(Continued from page 17)

If they find a place where living is easy and fishing is good they are apt to stay right there. For this reason trout hatcheries are occasionally plagued by an osprey who finds the holding pools a wonderful place to pick up a fish dinner. Prompt action is usually forthcoming by the hatchery men, however, and if the bird escapes the hail of lead aimed in his direction he usually takes the hint and decamps from the vicinity.

Ospreys engage in a northern and southern migration with the seasons along the Atlantic coast, apparently following the schools of fish as they move back and forth between the winter and summer grounds.

Nesting occurs in late April or May and two to four eggs are laid. The nest itself is constructed of twigs and sticks and any available heavy vegetation that may be around. Even cornstalks are utilized in the building process. The same nest is used year after year and through constant adding to and rebuilding, eventually becomes nearly as large as that of an eagle.

Because the osprey is a fairly slow bird in flight and lacks the wary caution inherent in many of the more predacious hawks, often remaining perched in a tree when men approach, it has been considerably reduced in numbers by gunners seeking an easy target. This is something that must be viewed with regret for it is true that to any lover of the out-of-doors, the sight of this great hawk swinging along the coast or over the marshland provides a real thrill. Killing just for killing's sake is not sport, it is a crime. It is unthinkable that anyone with even the barest rudiments of understanding in regard to the balance of nature should desire to see the extinction of any wildlife species. For this sake then, if for no other, we should protect this magnificent winged fisherman so that future generations may also thrill to the sight of him hovering above the lonely headlands of the Atlantic, or over the sear brown vistas of our vast marshland areas.

COMMISSION CARRIES ON

(Continued from page 7)

recent activities include:

1. Expansion of the Front Royal fish hatchery with the construction of a series of ponds, increasing production of smallmouth bass, rock bass and sunfish by 25 percent.
2. The expansion of the Stevensville fish hatchery by the addition of several large ponds, increasing largemouth bass production, blue gill bream and crappie by 20 percent.
3. Accelerated trout production at Marion hatchery by the construction of one large pond and six smaller ponds. Trout restocking of the state's 132 trout streams has continued most successfully during recent years.
4. Commission has made extensive repairs to Airfield Pond, a public fishing lake of 150 acres in Sussex County.
5. Commission recently adopted a policy of constructing a series of public fish ponds in areas deficient in public fishing waters. The policy of constructing one public pond a year has gotten well under way. The first pond, of 157 acres, was opened to public fishing in Mecklenburg County last month.

The future activities of the Fish Division can be summarized under four main headings:

1. Continue to carry out surveys to determine the best locations for future public fishing lakes within the state.
2. Continue structural improvements at the Stevensville fish hatchery so as to increase the fish output there.
3. Make structural improvements at the Marion trout rearing station so as to increase the carrying capacity of trout by 50 percent.
4. Continue construction of the new fish hatchery for smallmouth bass, rock bass and long-ear sunfish in Southwest Virginia. Operations on this new hatchery are already well under way.

Law Enforcement

In the field of law enforcement the Commission feels that only through a most vigorous program of game law enforcement will the Commonwealth's wildlife resources remain secure. Before July 1, 1948, the Commission had inadequate funds to employ sufficient game law enforcement officers to properly enforce the game and fish regulations of the Commonwealth. Since that time, however, additional funds have permitted adequate travel expenses for wardens and the Commission was able to initiate a program of re-classification of all field

officers who merited an increase in salary. Additional funds also permitted the employment of more conservation officers, commonly known as the *Flying Squadron*; men to cover the state's "hot" areas needing special law enforcement attention. To increase the efficiency and competence of all of the personnel of the Law Enforcement Division the Commission in 1949 established a school for wardens at V.P.I. This school will go into its second session next month at V.P.I. Game law enforcement men will be given instruction in the Commission's game and fish program, its educational work, general policies, field wildlife restoration program, law enforcement techniques, court procedure, safety with firearms, first aid and many other special courses for law enforcement officers.

Education

In the field of conservation education, the Commission has made notable strides in recent years. The first step following the war was to publish an official conservation magazine. Thereupon, on July 1, 1946, the Publication Division brought out its first issue of *Virginia Wildlife*, a monthly magazine devoted to highest standards of outdoor recreation through wildlife conservation. This magazine has enjoyed continued publication since that date. During the interim, many other publications of wildlife education in nature have been published. These include the publication of the book *Mammals of Virginia* by Handley and Patton, the booklets *Virginia's Long Range Wildlife Program*, and *Game Birds, Mammals and Fish of Virginia*, and numerous reprints from *Virginia Wildlife*.

On July 1, 1949, the Commission made several reorganization moves. Among these was the disbandment of the Publication Division and the establishment of an Education Division with designs for expansion of every phase of conservation education work. This program is now well under way and includes considerable expansion in publicity and publication work, increased paid circulation of *Virginia Wildlife*, improved photographic facilities including operation of a new photographic darkroom, a motion picture film production service, and a special services field program for schools and clubs.

The Commission feels that education in conservation is one of the "must" needs of the future, and that only an enlightened citizenry acquainted with the importance of wildlife and all of the interrelated resources will bring to the Commonwealth the best and the wisest use of all of our natural wealth.

FLY ROD GOES TO SEA

(Continued from page 9)

ounces. This is the same rod used by Joe Brooks, the foremost salt water fly rod man in America. You can use a lighter rod and it is possible to catch salt water fish on almost any kind of fly rod. However, the wind almost always blows around salt water and there will be days when you will find it almost impossible to get out your line with a light rod. With my Orvis I can get out a long line with a minimum of effort. The heavy rod is also important because in salt water you use larger flies than those normally used in fresh water. These and the popping bugs are very wind resistant and it takes a heavy, slow action rod to get them out without undue effort.

You may fish a long time without needing all your backing but if you tie into a big fish you will be glad you have every yard of it. That big fish can come at any minute in salt water and without the backing, and plenty of it, you will lose the very fish you have been wanting to catch. A hundred yards will do for most fish but a hundred and fifty yards would be safer.

Leaders used vary from 12 to 20 pound test and the best leader is one tapered down from 20 to 12 pounds. While a tapered leader is not essential almost all of the better fishermen use it. You can cast much better with a tapered leader but even more important when a tapered leader is used you can get a much better action with your fly. I prefer nylon but you may use gut leaders if they are your preference. If you fish for bluefish discard your nylon or gut leader in favor of a fine wire leader or at least use a fine wire leader for a few inches back from your fly. What the sharp teeth of a bluefish can do to a nylon or gut leader is something and without wire you will just lose a lot of good flies. The conventional leader used in salt water is usually nine feet long.

As for flies, salt water fish have been taken on almost all kinds of flies but they seem to have a fondness for white or yellow streamers. My own choice is the Joe Brooks #103 white streamer, which is tied on a No. 3 rustproof Z. Nickel hook. The Joe Brooks yellow streamer on the same hook runs it a close second. For our Virginia fish I do not believe you will find a better fly. The Joe Brooks popping bugs, both the white and the yellow, are fine for rock and trout and they are also mighty good in a pond for fresh water bass. While I have not taken any channel bass on them I am sure they would take a popping bug in shallow water or when they are feeding near the surface.

Now you need to know where to fish. By ex-

perimenting you will find the best place for the particular kind of fish you want to catch. As a general proposition, however, you will get good fly fishing around old pilings, rock jetties, over sunken pilings and rocks, over grass beds and around oyster bars. Needless to say you should fish in fairly shallow water for your fly or bug will be on the top or near it. If you fish in deep water you minimize your chances unless the fish are schooling near the surface.

Rockfish hang around the kinds of places just mentioned. Try for them there. Of course they frequently school on the surface when feeding. Watch the gulls and cast to any surface feeding fish you see.

Your best bet for bluefish would be to chum them up in the normal manner and cast back in the chum line. If you can find a school of blues on the surface, however, chumming won't be necessary.

Try the surf on the ocean for channel bass. They sometimes come to the top in schools and if you can find a school of course you are all set for them.

To get a bonita, or cobia, as they are officially known, your best chance will be just to be ready while fishing for other fish, especially bluefish. Most bonita in Virginia are caught by men fishing for bluefish; certainly this is true on the Western side of the Bay. If a bonita comes up in the chum line drop a fly in front of him and work your fly slowly. He will take it if you work it right and then you will be in for a real battle.

If you know much about salt water angling you will know where to look for the various species. If you get your fly or popping bug where they have a chance to see it you can look for some fast action.

Anyone who has had much experience with both fresh and salt water game fish knows that pound for pound the salt water fish is usually a much better battler than his cousin in fresh water. You will be amazed at what a five pound rock or blue can do on a fly rod and if and when you land him you will have changed opinion, I believe, of the fighting qualities of your favorite fresh water fish. Bass, trout, perch, pike and the other fresh water fish are fun on a fly rod. I have caught a many a one in my day and I expect to catch many another but when it comes to real action give me a salt water game fish every time. Don't take my word for it but find out for yourself. And I would be willing to wager something pretty you will have a new conception of fishing when you land your first fair sized salt water game fish on a fly rod.



Field Force Notes

Sheep Killing Bears Cause Trouble in Tazewell County

E. W. Wilson, game warden of Tazewell County recently conducted a bear hunt on Walkers Mountain. The hunt was authorized by the Game Commission after complaints by farmers of Rich Valley that their sheep were being destroyed.

Seventy-five men joined in the hunt and shortly after the start, 3 bears were jumped. Bill Shelburn and Allen Brooks of Tazewell arrived later with 15 hands and 2 more bears were started up.

Woodrow Newman, Smyth County game warden and Walter Hampton, Grayson County game warden, were both in the hunt until a late hour. Several shots were fired at the bears by members of the hunting party, but none of the animals appeared to be hurt.

Three of the farmers in the area reported that they had lost a total of 19 sheep to the marauders. Game warden Newman said that if further reports of damage are received, the hunt may be resumed at a later date.

4th Annual Wildlife Essay Contest Planned for Virginia Schools

The Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries and the Virginia Division of the Izaak Walton League of America have again agreed to cooperate in sponsoring the Fourth Annual Wildlife Essay Contest for Virginia Schools.

Because it was felt that the contest was an important medium in disseminating conservation knowledge to the youth of Virginia, the Commission, in a meeting held in Richmond on May 12th, voted to put up \$500 to be used as prize money in the contest. The Izaak Walton League, in a meeting held the day before, also agreed to furnish \$500 toward the prizes, making a total of \$1,000 for this purpose for the next school year.

The subject for the new essay contest will be "The Importance of Wildlife Conservation and Related Resources." The contest will follow the pattern established during the three previous years and will be open to school children in grades 5 through 12 throughout the state. Entries will be judged in their respective grade classifications and winners will be selected on this basis.

The contest has steadily increased in popularity throughout the state each year since its inception and judging by past trends an even more enthusiastic response than ever before is expected for the new contest.

Illegal Goose Hunting Draws Fine for Richmond Man

Richmond city warden Julian Hill had an unusual game law violation recently. Savannah Whitaker of Richmond apparently couldn't control an impulse to do a little goose hunting—season or no season. That in itself wouldn't be unusual in the history of game law violation, but the location that Whitaker chose to do his illegal hunting certainly was. A small pond located at Manry and Fifteenth Streets in Richmond provided the setting for his goose shooting.

Unfortunately for Whitaker, the Third Police Station was located just two blocks from his blind. Just a few minutes after he fired and winged a large Canada goose he was taken into custody by Sergeant W. H. Enroughty who notified warden Hill.



Photo by Speers

Game Warden Julian Hill of Richmond holds the illegally wounded goose outside the Game Commission offices.

Whitaker was charged with shooting a wild goose out of season, hunting within the city limits, and firing a shotgun inside the city. Judge Mauriee of the Richmond police court levied fines totaling \$60. Federal charges are still pending.

The slightly wounded goose was released to the care of warden Hill.



V. F. S. Photo

The Virginia Forest Service won second prize of \$150 for this fine float at the Winchester Apple Blossom Festival. Smokey's pretty proud!

Virginia Forest Service Float Wins Prize at Winchester Festival

Smokey, the Virginia Forest Service's fire preventin' bear, recently came away from Winchester, Virginia's Apple Blossom Festival with top honors. He, with a group of his small animal friends, rode on a float in the festival's Grand Feature Parade, and ably demonstrated the animal kingdom's concern over one of man's inherent weaknesses—carelessness with fire.

The bear received great admiration and approval from his animal companions and the 100,000 people lining Winchester's streets. For Smokey, however, it fell unnoticed because he was too intent in his work of extinguishing a campfire so carelessly left by a human fisherman.

The float, which was built and entered in the festival parade by the Virginia Forest Service, took second prize in the Artistic Float Division. Smokey, who appeared as a colorful, lifesize, plywood cutout, poured water from a pail on the glowing embers of a fire, which was presumably left in the forest by a camper. Realism was added by chemical smoke rising from the embers and a small electrically driven water pump which supplied Smokey's pail. The small animals were grouped about him in an admiring, but somewhat frightened, circle.

PLEASE

In order to complete our files we are in need of the following back issues of *Virginia Wildlife*: January issue, 1949; May issue, 1947; August issue, 1947. Anyone having any of these issues would do us a great favor by sending them along to us at the Commission offices in Richmond.

Thanks!

Rockingham Game and Fish Association Arranges Window Exhibit

The Rockingham Game and Fish Association recently placed an exhibit in the window of the Telephone Co. in Harrisonburg, designed to encourage the putting out of perennial plants and seeds such as lespedeza for wildlife cover.

The exhibit stressed that the plants and seeds are furnished free to all farmers or woodland owners by the State Game Commission. It showed a pair of quail and a ruffed grouse in a green thicket in front of which was a sign reading:

"Mr. Farmer and Mr. Hunter, would you like to have more game and songbirds? We can help you. Rockingham Game and Fish Association, Norris L. Bradford, Sr., game committee chairman."

Posters of the Game Commission were displayed in the window along with copies of *Virginia Wildlife* and free bags of lespedeza seed.

Illegal Killing of Elk in Giles County Costs Farmer \$250

Charles Miller of White Gate was fined \$50 and costs and \$200 replacement charges for killing two elk in Giles County recently.

County game warden W. T. Jamison said that the kills were found by a passerby on Big Walker Mountain, who reported it to him. He went to the scene with Bland County warden Ben Bird and found the bodies of the animals in a decomposed condition.

Miller was questioned later by the wardens and admitted the killings. He claimed that the elk were damaging his wheat fields when slain.

The killings took place about 15 miles from where the animals were dumped, according to the wardens.



Photo by J. Turner

Forest game manager Ramsey and Virginia game law enforcement officers Jamison, Heflin, Bird and Pickrel view the bodies of two elk killed illegally in Giles County.



FREE OUTDOOR FILMS AVAILABLE FOR ORGANIZATIONAL USE

Schools and clubs should note that the Modern Talking Picture Service, Inc., 1027 Vermont Ave., N. W., Washington 5, D. C., is offering free bookings for four 16 mm outdoor movies in color and sound. The pictures are: Pheasants Galore, Whistling Wings, Realm of the Wild, Silvertip, and She Say Socko.

The demand on the supply of films here at the Game Commission sometimes exceeds the supply. Therefore, it would be well for organizations and schools to take advantage of these highly entertaining and instructional movies.

Those interested in obtaining these films for free showings should write to the above address. A multiple booking schedule will be sent in the return mail.

* * *

UNCONTROLLED DOGS ARE SPRING PROBLEM FOR WARDENS

The problem of uncontrolled dogs gives Virginia's game wardens new troubles every spring. When dogs are properly cared for they are among man's best friends, but when they are allowed to run loose with little or no effort at control, they can become a menace to both domestic animals and wildlife.

At this time of year, wild dogs become a serious predatory factor in the wildlife picture. Young rabbits, nesting quail and fawn deer are all fair game to the ranging dogs. Untold thousands of these young wild creatures are destroyed each year in this manner.

Self hunting dogs have no business in Virginia's fields and woods at any time of year, but they should certainly not be allowed to run during the period when wild birds and game are producing the next generation of their kind.

Dog owners should see that their dogs are properly restrained during this important season and properly cared for when taken into the field at other periods, so that no unnecessary slaughter of our wildlife occurs.

SNAPPING TURTLES PROVE TO BE DUCK PREDATORS

According to a recent report by the Wildlife Management Institute the unsavory reputation of the snapping turtle as a predator, by scientific research, has been found to be entirely justified. These reptiles were found by the Maine Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit to take full-grown birds as well as ducklings.

Last summer staff members of the Maine Unit carried out an experimental trapping program during the month of July on a few marshes which were known to contain both snapping turtles and broods of ducklings. A total of 35 turtles, ranging in weight from 5 to 41 pounds were caught and their digestive tracts preserved for analysis during the winter in the Unit laboratory.

Three of the specimens contained no food in the stomachs or intestines, but of the 32 remaining turtles 13, or 37 percent contained remains of birds, primarily ducks and pied-billed grebes. The digestive tracts of most of the turtles contained remains of only one bird but one 30 pound glutton had eaten two downy-young grebes, one full grown grebe, one full-grown goldeneye duck, and one adult ring-necked duck. Remains of at least 10 ducks, four of which were over half-grown young or adults, were identified in the study.

* * *

"PLANT AMERICA" MOVEMENT UNDER WAY

A new movement is under way which deserves the support of all interested in conservation and the future well-being of America. It is the "Plant America" program sponsored by the American Association of Nurserymen.

The objective of the program, which had its inception in New York last winter, is "To conserve the land, to make it greener and more productive for abundant life, beauty and recreation."

The movement has been endorsed by representatives of various conservation organizations throughout the nation and follows in the wake of the "Keep Virginia Green" program already underway in the state.



for
Students
Teachers
Parents



Photo by Kesteloo

Summer campers learn many wildlife facts along a nature trail.

NO MORE PENCILS, no more books. . . . Vacation time is here again, and so this month the school page is going to be devoted to vacation activities for conservation minded youngsters.

For those of you who are fortunate enough to get away to camp the chances for wildlife study and learning are almost endless. Many camps have a nature counsellor, someone whose main job is to instruct in the various branches of natural history such as bird lore, botany and zoology. If your camp has such a counsellor, you will have every opportunity in the world to acquire at least a fair working knowledge of nature's out-of-doors.

If no one in the camp has this work as a specific job, however, don't get discouraged. Almost every one is interested to some degree in nature study and perhaps you could sell someone the idea of a nature trail to help this along.

Now a nature trail doesn't have

to be anything elaborate, in fact it can very likely follow the existing paths or trails in the area, but special attention should be given to carrying it through different types of habitat—hill and swamp for example, so that the various birds and animals that frequent each may be seen. It should be planned so that all or most of the species of trees in the area are along the route; in this way they can be easily studied and the differences noted. A few good field books are a great help in using a nature trail and in this regard the "Field Book of North American Mammals," by H. E. Anthony, the "Field Book of American Trees and Shrubs," by F. Schuyler Mathews, and Roger Tory Peterson's "Field Guide to the Birds" should be mentioned. The first two are published by G. P. Putnam's Sons, the third by Houghton Mifflin Co.

Other activities for campers can be found in habitat improvement work. Everyone knows that food and shelter are important to all living creatures and the abundance or scarcity of these factors directly affects the wildlife population in an area. Although the season for major seeding work has past, food patches can still be planted and shrubs and trees for shelter purposes may still be set out.

Locations for habitat improvement work should be carefully considered before any labor is begun. Habitat work is just like locating a grocery store. If you build your store in a little used location you will attract some people but probably not enough to make it worth while. By the same token the location for habitat improvement work should be in a natural use area for game and not chosen haphazardly.

For boys and girls at home here is a wonderful opportunity to catch up on all that reading you were going to do! No worrying about Math or English or unfinished history assignments—you've got the time free to enjoy the luxury of doing just what you want to do.

As a suggestion along the reading line, for you boys and girls of the sixth through the eighth grades, get acquainted with the late Ernest Thompson Seton's wonderful nature stories, especially "Wild Animals I Have Known."

For high school readers "Our Plundered Planet" by Fairfield Os-



Photo by Kesteloo

The neighborhood library has much good nature and wildlife information on its shelves.

born, or "Road to Survival" by William Vogt, are recommended. Both of these books are well written forward looking works and are guaranteed to make you think. Don't let them scare you, however, because after all you are the coming generation and the dire predictions don't have to happen—if you do something about it.

VIRGINIA WILDLIFE

KEY CONSERVATION EMPLOYEES in the VIRGINIA NATIONAL FOREST COOPERATIVE WILDLIFE PROGRAM

THOMAS JEFFERSON NATIONAL FOREST

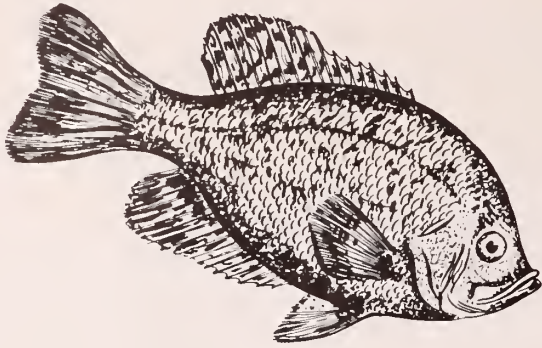
A. R. Cochran	Forest Supervisor	Roanoke, Va.
K. W. McNasser	Fire Control Assistant	Roanoke, Va.
Paul W. Sundheimer	Timber Management Assistant	Roanoke, Va.
W. W. Taylor	Acquisition Assistant	Roanoke, Va.
W. F. Merrilees	Administrative Assistant	Roanoke, Va.
R. W. Bierbaum	Forest Engineer	Roanoke, Va.
C. L. Pulliam	Principal Clerk	Roanoke, Va.
J. N. Van Alstine	District Ranger	New Castle, Va.
L. R. Smith	District Ranger	Natural Bridge Sta., Va.
E. F. Wolcott	District Ranger	Wytheville, Va.
W. B. Ward	District Ranger	Norton, Va.
S. H. Ockers	District Ranger	Marion, Va.
Samuel W. Williamson	Game Manager	Arcadia, Va.
Bent C. Medley	Game Manager	New Castle, Va.
Lon F. Oliver	Game Manager	Goldbond, Va.
Virgil C. Boone	Game Manager	Speedwell, Va.
Wilfred W. Ramsey	Game Manager	RFD 2, Bland, Va.
Roland C. Webb	Game Manager	Rt. 2, Box 244-A, Pulaski, Va.
William T. Medley	Game Manager	Sugar Grove, Va.
Fred Roop	Game Manager	Damascus, Va.
Joe Rose	Game Manager	Tacoma, Va.
Otto D. Kendrick	Game Manager	Isom, Va.
Charles R. Sparks	Game Manager	Ceres, Va.
D. B. Kibler	General District Assistant	New Castle, Va.
C. D. Elmore, Jr.	General District Assistant	New Castle, Va.
John D. Whitmore, Jr.	General District Assistant	Natural Bridge Sta., Va.
K. W. Bradley	Forester	Natural Bridge Sta., Va.
J. T. Fromme, Jr.	Forester	Natural Bridge Sta., Va.
W. H. Campbell	General District Assistant	Marion, Va.
V. W. Stamper	General District Assistant	Wytheville, Va.
H. C. Kennedy	General District Assistant	Wytheville, Va.
E. J. Tobias	General District Assistant	Norton, Va.
C. B. Clark	General District Assistant	Norton, Va.
T. B. Stapleton	General District Assistant	Norton, Va.

GEORGE WASHINGTON NATIONAL FOREST

Ernest M. Karger	Forest Supervisor	Harrisonburg, Va.
Abner Casey	Fire Control Assistant	Bridgewater, Va.
John C. Claman	Administrative Assistant	Harrisonburg, Va.
Peter J. Hanlon	Resource Management Assistant	Rt. 1, Mt. Crawford, Va.
J. N. Jefferson	Forest Engineer	Harrisonburg, Va.
Harold J. Barrett	Timber Management Assistant	Harrisonburg, Va.
John R. Mayell	Principal Clerk	Harrisonburg, Va.
Richard F. Haussman	District Ranger	Woodstock, Va.
Richard E. Elliott	District Ranger	Bridgewater, Va.
Meredith Leitch	District Ranger	Staunton, Va.
Bernard A. Eger	District Ranger	Buena Vista, Va.
John R. Hicks	District Ranger	Hot Springs, Va.
John H. Noyes	District Ranger	Altamont, Va.
Donald G. Fauber	Game Warden	Stuarts Draft, Va.
Clinton E. Meredith	Forestry Aid	Edinburg, Va.
Sam C. Heltzel, Jr.	Forestry Aid	Bridgewater, Va.
Carl Wilfong	Forestry Aid	Harrisonburg, Va.
Gerald E. Fawley	Forestry Aid	Staunton, Va.
Thomas H. Glass, Jr.	Forestry Aid	Buena Vista, Va.
M. Leon Powell	Forestry Aid (Dispatcher)	Covington, Va.
Matthew J. Keckley	Forestry Aid (Dispatcher)	Edinburg, Va.
Joseph R. Griffiths	Forester	Healing Springs, Va.
Keith T. Pfefferle	Forester	Covington, Va.
Claude G. Higgs	Game Manager	Rt. 1, Shenandoah, Va.
Floyd O. Simmons	Game Manager	Rt. 2, Edinburg, Va.
Golden B. Smith	Game Manager	Rt. 4, Harrisonburg, Va.
Clarence E. Huffer	Game Manager	Mt. Solon, Va.
Roy D. Hodge	Game Manager	Headwaters, Va.
Charles N. Jones	Game Manager	West Augusta, Va.
W. Dabney Wade	Game Manager	Fordwick, Va.
Gordon A. Demastus	Game Manager	RFD, Lyndhurst, Va.
H. R. Wooldridge	Game Manager	Star Route, Buena Vista, Va.
J. Gwin Lightner	Game Manager	Mt. Grove, Va.
Earl E. Law	Game Manager	Millboro, Va.
Gratton P. Fisher	Game Manager	Rt. 2, Hot Springs, Va.
John H. Miller	Game Manager	Jordan Mines, Va.

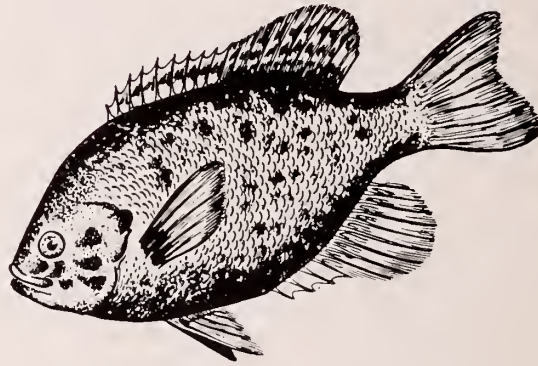
VIRGINIA GAME COMMISSION COOPERATING DISTRICT GAME BIOLOGISTS

Richard H. Cross	2734 Crystal Spring Avenue	Roanoke, Va. (Jefferson National Forest)
Charles H. Peery	Box 281	Tazewell, Va. (Jefferson National Forest)
Elmer V. Richards	Route 2, Box 83	Harrisonburg, Va. (Geo. Washington National Forest)



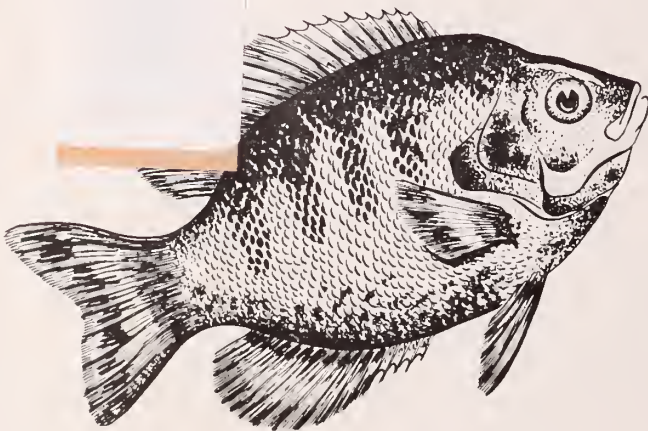
PUMPKINSEED GETS HIS
NAME FROM THE MARKED
FLATNESS OF HIS BODY

CRAPPIE THRIVE IN SLOW,
CLEAN STREAMS AND PONDS



PANFISH

|||_



THE ROCK BASS VARIES
IN COLOR FROM ALMOST
BLACK TO NEARLY WHITE

BLUEGILL BREEM RANK
FIRST AMONG PANFISH
FOR FIGHT AND TASTE

